

# Anti-Social Behaviour: Our Strategy 2019 - 24

## Introduction

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Our **Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy** sets out our coordinated approach to address Anti-Social behaviour (ASB) in the borough. It is a shared strategy, delivered by the Council and the Waltham Forest Community Safety Partnership (SafetyNet) in conjunction with Housing providers in the borough.

## Vision

The partnership has a single overarching vision for tackling anti-social behaviour:

As a borough we will take a multi-agency approach to reduce ASB and its impact on communities. We will work in partnership with others to resolve issues quickly, efficiently and keep everyone affected engaged through a transparent and accessible process.

## Outcomes

The strategy sets out to achieve the following outcomes:

- Incidents of anti-social behaviour are reduced
- Residents feel safe.
- Improved response and resolution
- Improved customer care and reporting
- Improved communication and engagement
- Residents report ASB when they are affected by it.

# Principles

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In order to achieve the outcomes outlined we will work to the following principles:

1. **Resourcing:** We work together as part of a multi-agency team with clear accountabilities and lead roles for different cases.
2. **Tasking and Hotspot Operations:** Having a targeted impact in our problem areas.
3. **Governance:** Providing effective governance to oversee the multi-agency team at a strategic level and at an operational level to monitor open cases across the borough.
4. **Performance:** Sharing insight to understand anti-social behaviour across the whole borough.
5. **Customer Journeys:** Customers will be able to easily report issues and get a response from the right person. We will be “tenure-neutral” in our approaches – residents should not receive a different level of service depending on where they live

## Context

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### Why do we need an anti-social behaviour strategy?

Keeping the borough clean and safe is a priority for the local authority. Reducing anti-social behaviour is pivotal in achieving this. Its impact can be devastating to residents, businesses and visitors. For victims and the wider community, it can become a destructive, cumulative issue leading to a poor quality of life. It often overlaps with more serious crime, and this can contribute to communities feeling unsafe where they live and work.

We know that ASB is a concern for our residents. In 2017 31% of residents reported that they are worried about anti-social behaviour. In addition, 34% of our residents were worried about crime. This is 4% higher than the London average.<sup>1</sup>

There is an overlap between hotspots for violent crime and hotspots for anti-social behaviour in the borough. Whilst the link is not necessarily causal, there are benefits in aligning approaches to tackling both. Addressing anti-social behaviour in the borough is a complex matter that requires the attention of many different agencies.

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<sup>1</sup> Metropolitan Police Public Aptitudes Survey in 2017/18.

## **The Development of the Strategy**

The strategy has been jointly developed by a number of agencies including the local authority, Metropolitan Police, Local Health services and local Registered Providers in order to provide a well-rounded multi-agency approach to tackling ASB. Our community safety partnership, SafetyNet, brings together these agencies and it is this body that will monitor and review the effectiveness of the strategy under its anti-social behaviour priority. Victims, witnesses and the wider community are central to the strategy and it is important that people have confidence that the partnership will deal with their problems in order to increase their sense of community and safety.

In 2018 the council and partners launched its Violence Reduction Partnership which seeks to take a public health approach to reduce the level of violent crime in the borough.

### **Why is a partnership approach so important?**

The Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 brought enhanced powers to the local authority, police and partners. Since then, different agencies have independently developed their own approaches to responding and preventing anti-social behaviour. Having a clear and consistent approach across partners will mean:

- There is clear accountability for agencies in preventing and responding to incidents.
- It promotes a “tenure-neutral approach.” whereby residents can expect the same positive outcomes, irrespective of whether they live in social housing, the private-rented sector or they own their property.
- Effective joint working can maximise the impact and benefit achieved with limited, finite resources.

# What is Anti-Social Behaviour?

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The partnership uses the following definition which is based on the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014:

“Anti-social behaviour is a conduct that:

- has caused, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to one or more persons not of the same household
- is capable of causing nuisance or annoyance to a person in relation to that person's occupation of residential premises
- is capable of causing housing-related nuisance or annoyance to any person”

This can include:

- Nuisance neighbours
- Street or residential drug dealing
- Abusive language
- Vandalism
- Intimidation or harassment

This is not a complete list and regardless of any definition all agencies will take reports of anti-social behaviour seriously. Some of these examples can also be criminal offences, and when that is the case we maintain a strong partnership approach to deal with those causing the problems.

# Our Approach to Anti-Social Behaviour

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Our approach is comprised of four key stages:

**Stage 1: Prevention**

**Stage 2: Early intervention**

**Stage 3: Support**

**Stage 4: Enforcement**

These are described in detail in the visual on the next page. These stages apply across all anti-social behaviour. However, our approaches differ slightly for dealing with hotspots to dealing with case management.

There is not necessarily a linear progression from stage to stage and not all stages are always necessary. For example, for enviro-crime cases we aim to prevent incidents from happening but when an incident has occurred we would proceed directly to enforcement.

# Anti-Social Behaviour Framework

## Prevention

**Ideally we stop ASB before it happens.**

- Improved street-lighting
- Visible CCTV
- Visible joint patrols
- Hyper-local community engagement
- Gangs prevention programmes
- Community Safety initiatives

## Early Intervention

**When it does occur we act quickly with informal interventions to minimise impact.**

- Follow-up visits or phone calls with victims and perpetrators.
- Warning letter
- Acceptable Behaviour Contract
- Parental Control Agreement
- Community Protection Warning

## Support

**The ASB can indicate that someone is vulnerable and in need of support services. Any safeguarding concerns need to be raised to social care.**

- Drugs and alcohol support service.
- Rough sleeping outreach service.
- Community mental health team referrals.
- Gangs interventions
- Social care services.

## Enforcement

**Enforcement is a last resort but can sometimes be a necessary and effective tool.**

- Injunction.
- Closure orders against cuckooing cases.
- Landlord licensing sanctions.
- Premise Closure Order
- Criminal Behaviour Order
- Notice of seeking possession

## **Tackling priority locations**

The strategy is intended to prevent ASB and to effectively combat incidences of ASB whenever and wherever encountered. However, we recognise that much of our experienced ASB is currently located in certain 'hotspot' areas. The strategy will be underpinned by an intelligence-led approach to identify and tackle ASB within identified hotspot areas in the borough.

## **A new approach to case management:**

Individual cases will have clear case leads depending on the category of ASB and property type or location. The lead officer could be a representative from the police, the council or housing providers among others. This means the case will be led by the best suited officer.

Quality assurance processes and robust governance will be in place to ensure a consistently high level of service is delivered at each stage. This will also allow us to assess if the complexity of the case changes (e.g. if there are safeguarding concerns)

## **Support for Victims**

A key focus of our approach is to provide effective support to ASB victims. We will ensure that we better understand the impact ASB has on their lives and ensure safeguarding processes are in place to protect those most vulnerable from further harm.

# Implementation and Monitoring

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The Waltham Forest Community Partnership “SafetyNet” will be responsible for implementing and monitoring this strategy. SafetyNet is a partnership between the council, police, probation, fire, and health services, as well as key partners including housing providers, victim services, plus community and voluntary sectors. The remit of the partnership includes reducing anti-social behaviour as one of its strategic priorities.

The Anti-Social Behaviour Board meets quarterly and will review progress against the strategy on a **quarterly** basis and evaluate on an **annual** basis.

There will be performance reports on a monthly basis that will be monitored at an operational level.

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